1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.168-B]
301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
197 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatrization is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like
302 to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All these instruments, he claims, however, produce sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of a leopard's claw.

A further inquiry made among the archers in 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta, 1952, 279) and added some supplementary facts. The *toré* hut is to be found near or in the camp itself. Women and children may attend the *toré* ceremonies organized by the men. The "presidents" are an old man and an old woman. The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, implored for help in the hunt. The society, Schebesta concludes, has a religious aspect. This same study revealed the use of three wooden trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodzo*), in fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through which the performer sings into it (*luma*); and three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do
[575] not participate fully in the proceedings of the *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and
[304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkumbi*
199 serves merely to give status in villager society.
17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation
[554] into the religious associations of their own men and women; the *molimo* and *elima*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

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Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

854 Newborn infants are scarified on the stom-
304 ach, chest, and leg, and the wounds are
757 treated with herbs, often mixed with goat manure if the net hunters are near a village.

759 The Mbuti in this area claim to have a method which they have practiced for a long time for the treatment of paralysis. Examples given, however, describe this treatment as being given to villager or Pygmy children by villagers. The treatment can also be given to an adult. For paralysis of the legs, it consists essentially of standing the patient in a pit, filling it, and stamping the earth down hard. Only the upper part of the patient's body, which is continually washed with warm water, is left above ground. The stem of the *atumba* (a small plant resembling a dandelion) is cut and cooked with manioc and rubbed into a light incision in the affected limb. The patient may be kept in the pit for four hours a day for a week; each time he is taken out he is washed with warm water. It is claimed that after this treatment the patient will be able to walk, however crippled he was beforehand.

A similar treatment is reported for sprained back or arm. The patient is laid flat in a shallow pit. He is covered from knees to chest with a mixture of earth and leaves, about one

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 197

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 258-A]

881 885 224 575 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I have never witnessed nor been told of any formal rite introducing the new hunter to the association, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only act that might be regarded as a formal token of initiation is the cutting of three sets of three vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

881 885 304 575

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R 108-L]

C
891
292
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15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching *nkumbi* during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

P
516
M4
881
304
152
C
[152]

16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult, but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the forest, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunting fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's description of food offerings being made to the forest, except through villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals certain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for game are comparable in their political and religious connotations:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided. Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the village, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was something about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
• 304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same
when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry
hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled
them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today,
ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a
part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And
as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to
camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married
and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me.
He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo
out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing
of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good
for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay
long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the
Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam
build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by con-
tinuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just
beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-
covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of under-
growth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now
called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice.
It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a
quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent molimo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in